

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PRAGUE 03054 200819Z

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OEXC, CZ

SUBJECT: AMSPECIALISTS FOR EASTERN EUROPEAN ENGLISH SEMINARS

STATE FOR CU/EE-RICHMOND FROM AMBASSADOR

USIA FOR IEU-SHIRLEY FROM AMBASSADOR

REF: STATE 244352

1. CONTENTS OF REFTEL REFLECT A POLICY DECISION TAKEN WITHOUT, TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, PRIOR CONSULTATION WITH AT LEAST THIS EE EMBASSY, ON A MATTER WHICH SUBSTANTIALLY AFFECTS OUR EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL PROGRAM, AND WHICH LEAVES AT LEAST ONE SIGNIFICANT UNANSWERED QUESTION.

2. IN PRINCIPLE, WE CANNOT DISAGREE WITH CU POLICY WHICH "STRESSES NEW FACES AND EXPOSURE BY MAXIMUM NUMBER OF AMERICAN PARTICIPANTS" TO AMSPEC ENGLISH TEACHING PROGRAM. HOWEVER, WE WOULD HOPE THAT IF IT IS A QUESTION OF "NEW FACES" VERSUS THE POLITICAL EFFECTIVENESS OF A PROGRAM AS IT SUPPORTS US INTERESTS IN A GIVEN COUNTRY, THE LATTER FACTOR WOULD WEIGH

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PAGE 02 PRAGUE 03054 200819Z

MORE HEAVILY.

3. IN CONCRETE TERMS, WE ARE FACED WITH A SITUATION OF REAL POLITICAL SENSITIVITY IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA, ONE IN WHICH PRIOR AREA FAMILIARITY IS IMPORTANT. IN THE LOCAL CASE, THE OLOMOUC AND FRENSTADT ENGLISH TEACHING SEMINARS REPRESENT THE ONLY OCCASIONS WHEN THE EMBASSY'S CULTURAL PROGRAMS HAVE ACCESS TO LARGE NUMBERS OF CZECH AND SLOVAK TEACHERS, SCHOOLS, AND INSTITUTES OF HIGHER LEARNING. THESE SEMINARS ARE CLOSELY MONITORED POLITICALLY BY GOC, AND THIS YEAR'S BRITISH LECTURER AT FRENSTADT WAS VISITED IN HIS ROOMS BY POLICE AND REPORTED TWO POLICE SURVEYS OF MATERIALS BEING DISTRIBUTED.

4. IN SUCH A SITUATION, WE ARE AT A LOSS TO UNDERSTAND WHY DEPARTMENT IS SUDDENLY WITHDRAWING ITS SUPPORT FOR A GOING AND EFFECTIVE PROGRAM OF SUMMER LANGUAGE SEMINARS TO POTENTIALLY INTRODUCE "NEW FACES" IN OTHER PROGRAM AREAS.

5. THE ISSUE, OF COURSE, IS MORE THAN CONTINUED USE OF WELL-ESTABLISHED AND WELL-KNOWN PROFESSIONALS WHO, IN ADDITION TO ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS, HAVE THE POLITICAL SENSITIVITY TO FUNCTION IN OUR LOCAL ENVIRONMENT. WHILE WE FAVOR THE USE OF SUCH GRANTEES, AND WILL SUPPORT THEM FROM THE POST'S GOE, WE SEE A POSSIBLE BLIND SPOT IN THE NEW POLICY SPELLED OUT TO US FOR THE FIRST TIME IN DETAIL IN REFTTEL.

6. SIMPLY PROVIDING A LIST OF FULBRIGHTERS WILL NOT ADEQUATELY SPEAK TO THE POINT OF EVALUATING THEIR POLITICAL MATURITY FOR WORK IN EE. THE QUESTION IS MORE THAN HAVING AN APPRAISED LIST "IN ORDER TO PROVIDE AMPLE TIME TO PREPARE FOR NEXT YEAR'S SEMINARS." THE QUESTION IS NOT SO MUCH ONE OF TIME, BUT OF HAVING THE SORTS OF PERFORMANCE DATA THAT, IN ADDITION TO STRAIGHT PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS, WILL ENSURE THAT OUR RARE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONTACT WITH LOCAL TEACHERS WILL ALSO BE EFFECTIVE ONES.
BYRNE

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